



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Coalition Launches Grateful Nation Fund To Support Families of Kabul Airport Bombing Victims**

*Anonymous donor taps Coalition to Salute America's Heroes to provide funds in honor of 13 KIA servicemembers*

LEESBURG, Va. (Aug. 23, 2022) – As the first anniversary of the Kabul, Afghanistan, airport bombing approaches, the nation will be called to reflect upon the 13 American heroes' lives that were tragically lost on that day: August 26, 2021.

Thanks to the generous contributions of an anonymous Texas donor, the [Coalition to Salute America's Heroes](#) (Coalition) established the **Grateful Nation Fund** to support the families of the servicemembers killed in action during the Kabul military withdrawal.

The Coalition has already assisted two of the 13 families:

- The mother of **Lcpl. David Espinoza** said that her entire family is still in a deep state of mourning, especially as the fateful anniversary nears. The Coalition provided an \$8,000 check to help with living expenses and to cover the cost of fulfilling Elizabeth's lifelong dream: to take her remaining three kids to Disney World. (Note: When a Disney employee heard what the Coalition was doing for the Espinozas, the family was greeted with a special welcome reception and gift basket, and given an upgraded room, VIP and fast passes for each park. David's sister Delilah will also receive the American and Disney flags that have been flying over the Magic Kingdom for her birthday - which falls on the anniversary of the Kabul attack.)
- The family of **Cpl. Humberto "Bert" A. Sanchez** is receiving a \$10,000 check to help with living expenses and to gain healthy rejuvenation after a planned family vacation was canceled last year due to Bert's shocking death. His mother, Carol Doolittle, has battled severe depression and his siblings are still recovering from missing more than a month of school. The much-needed trip will allow the family to focus on their mental health and try to "get back to normal, without Bert around."

The Coalition has reached out to the 11 other families as well, and looks forward to making more dreams come to fruition in the weeks and months ahead.

“None of us will ever forget the tragic events of that horrible day,” reflected Donny Daughenbaugh, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.) and Regional Vice President of the Coalition. “Our goal for the Grateful Nation Fund is to wrap our collective arms around the families of our fallen heroes and let them know we are here for them. We’re grateful for the generosity of our anonymous donor, and we are determined to use this fund to make a lasting difference for family members who were left behind.”

### **About the Coalition**

Since its establishment in 2004, the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes has provided an immediate, invaluable lifeline to thousands of America's combat-wounded veterans. The Leesburg, Va.-based organization is distinguished from other veteran-focused groups by its direct financial assistance to America's wounded heroes. Its Emergency Financial Aid program has stopped foreclosure proceedings on veterans' homes and kept their vehicles from being repossessed. Its innovative Heroes Thanking Heroes program provides transitional, part-time, flexible employment to nearly 50 combat-wounded veterans or their primary caregivers, enabling them to make phone calls from their homes, usually to personally thank donors for their contributions to the Coalition.

For more information on the Coalition, and to learn how you can support its mission, visit [www.saluteheroes.org](http://www.saluteheroes.org). Combat-wounded/disabled OIF/OEF/OND veterans are invited to join the Coalition and expand their camaraderie network by enrolling in the Veteran Circle program at <http://saluteheroes-vetcircle.org>.

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